THE

CONNECTION

BETWEEN

INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL

EXCELLENCE.

Where man, by nature fierce, has laid aſide
His fierceneſs, having learnt, though ſlow to learn,
The manners and the arts of civil life;——
Here virtue thrives, as in her proper ſoil;
Not rude, and ſurly, and beſet with thorns,
And terrible to ſight, as when ſhe ſprings
(If e'er ſhe ſpring ſpontaneous) in remote
And barbarous climes, where violence prevails,
And ſtrength is lord of all; but gentle, kind,
By culture tam'd, by liberty refreſh'd,
And all her fruits by radiant truth matur'd.

COWPER.

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THE

CONNECTION

BETWEEN

INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL EXCELLENCE.

INTELLECTUAL Excellence has been held in veneration in almoſt every age and country of the world. A cultivated imagination, a ſound judgment, ſuperior ſagacity, and extenſive knowledge, are gifts and attainments, which we learn, even from infancy, to admire and reverence. With eager hopes and ardent ambition we improve theſe gifts, we aſpire to theſe attainments; whilſt emulation is ſanctioned, and ſucceſs crowned, by the concurrent praiſes of mankind. For genius, for talents, for ſcience, and for arts, individuals have been honoured, when living; revered, when dead: communities have been reſpected in their proſperity, and celebrated when they have ceaſed to exiſt. Our nature itſelf exults, when we reflect upon a Homer, a Cicero, a Newton; and the proweſs, patriotiſm, or magnanimity of Greece or Rome, have not filled poſterity with greater admiration, than their intellectual fame. For the ſupport and advancement of intellect, in every civilized nation upon the globe, ſeminaries have been eſtabliſhed, revenues have

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been ſet apart, inſtruction courted, induſtry encouraged and applauded. And it would ſcarcely be too bold to affirm, that, with different degrees of deſire, and different modifications of purſuit, all men are actuated by a ſpirit of intellectual ambition.

The propriety of this homage and of this ambition, its conſiſtency with juſtice, and conformity to virtue, involved in the conſideration of the CONNECTION betwen INTELLECTUAL and MORAL EXCELLENCE, render this a queſtion of no ordinary intereſt and importance to mankind. For it is ſolely from the belief of this propriety, that the cultivation of the mind can appear uſeful or innocent, and that the benefits of refinement can be eſteemed deſirable.

THE POWERS of intellect cannot, certainly, prevail, in any great degree, without much cultivation; without thoſe external aſſiſtances, which, inſenſibly, ſubdue the ſtubborn nature of man, and prepare him to ſubmit to rational control; which, at the ſame time, qualify us to diſcern our duty, and diſpoſe us to act in obedience to its dictates; which declare to us our relation to each other; which teach us to reſpect mankind; which gradually convince us of the neceſſity of numberleſs reſtraints, moral and civil, divine and human; of the obligations, not merely to abſtinence from guilt, but to the conſtant and active exerciſe of virtue. Theſe are obligations, which rude underſtandings have not conſidered or cannot comprehend; and hence ſtupidity and ignorance coincide in their concluſions with the boldneſs of ſcepticiſm, and often, without knowing it, appear to queſtion the eſſential diſtinction between moral good and evil. But the cultivated mind both perceives the nature and the force of moral reſtrictions and ſocial duties, and becomes, at the ſame time, humanized into compliance and diſpoſed for virtue. Muſic is ſaid to have formed an important part of the education of youth amongſt the ſtates of Greece. The deſign of which cuſtom was to ſoften the mind and temper of the pupil, and

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diſpoſe him to perform the ſeveral duties of public and private life. Great are the benefits, which are affirmed, by ſome ancient hiſtorians and philoſophers, to have been hence derived to the morals of the Greeks[a]. And moral advancement may, upon ſimilar (and, indeed, upon better) grounds, be expected, from the modern ſyſtems of mental cultivation; ſince it is the natural effect of all ſuch exerciſes, as ſoften, whilſt they exalt, the mind, to produce, indirectly, the improvement of the morals; to render us more awake to all the charities of life; to baniſh brutality, and reconcile us to reſtraint.

It is, however, found, that minds the beſt informed and the moſt capacious are, ſometimes, in an equal degree, depraved; that the ſuggeſtions of intereſt, the ſolicitations of pleaſure, have, ſometimes, ſilenced the dictates of a noble underſtanding, and counteracted or obliterated the effects of cultivation.

Τα χρης' επις-αμεσθα και γιγνωσκομεν,
Ουκ εκπονεῖμεν δ'———
——— ἡδονην προδεντες αντι τȣ καλȣ[b].

And ſome, from that weakneſs, to which even the ableſt minds, influenced by ſtrong prejudices and ruling deſires, occaſionally yield, have ſuffered their reaſon to ſanction and to ſecond the impulſe of their paſſions; they have been, in a manner, corrupt upon principle, and ſyſtematically vicious.

It muſt be ſtill farther confeſſed, that the happy effects of intellectual proficiency are not unattended by many diſadvantages of

[a] Vide Monteſquieu upon this ſubject; who quotes the authority of Polybius, Plato, Ariſtotle, Plutarch, &c. Spirit of Laws, b. iv. c. 8. Though Adam Smith is not inclined to aſcribe ſo much efficacy to this part of the Grecian education. Wealth of Nations, vol. iii. p. 172. Dr. Gregory ſuppoſes that under muſic poetry was included. Comparative View, p. 143.

[b] Hippolytus, v. 385.

more general influence upon ſociety. Refinement, whilſt it mitigates the ferocity of nature, and diſpoſes men for the practice of the milder duties, may foſter vices, which appear to be favoured by ſenſibility of mind and ſoftneſs of manners. If revenge is leſs fatally indulged among civilized nations; if wars are by them conducted with abated rancour and qualified hoſtility; yet the vigilant and vindictive nicety of honour is frequently the ſource of a high degree of guilt. If, in ſuch nations, the groſſneſs of brutal ſenſuality does not equally prevail, yet the delicate blandiſhments of more poliſhed vice are neither few nor inconſiderable. A ſtate of refinement does not, therefore, neceſſarily exclude vices, however it may be thought to leſſen their deformity by the diminution of their groſſneſs.

But, though the influence of mental cultivation, either upon individuals or ſociety at large, is leſs favourable, in ſome points, than might be wiſhed and expected, the advantages of it, however, more than equal its pernicious conſequences. The moſt enlightened minds are, ſometimes, depraved; but the general tendency of cultivation is not to be affected by partial impediments. The faireſt gifts of Providence may, by the abuſes of the poſſeſſor, be converted into a curſe: the very food, which was deſigned for the ſupport of life, may be turned to its bane and its deſtruction. And however we may lament the effeminate vices, to which the progreſs of intellect may partly give birth, the objection muſt vaniſh, when we conſider, that this ſelf-ſame cauſe tends, above all others, to counteract their growth. Such is the obvious effect of thoſe purſuits, which alienate the mind from the allurements of ſenſe, which ſubſtitute and multiply innocent gratifications, and which are calculated to impreſs a conviction of their own ſuperior dignity. In proportion as the thirſt for knowledge increaſes, as ſubjects ariſe out of ſubjects, as enquiries give birth to enquiries, and the mind is irreſiſtibly engroſſed by boundleſs variety, the love of baſer pleaſures gradually ſubſides, the paſſions are beguiled, inſenſibly, into repoſe,

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or engaged in a better and more honourable ſervice. And that which is, at firſt, but occaſional control, becomes, at length, ſettled and habitual forbearance.

Yet this, one of the moſt favourable effects of mental advancement, may be, as ſome think, perverted into the contrary, by a craving and intemperate deſire of information. Deſertion of toilſome and perplexing duties, a too great thirſt for contemplative knowledge, abſtracted tranquillity of life, which ſeeks neither by ſtudy nor practice to benefit others, have been, ſometimes, placed to the diſadvantage of an elevated intellect. But this total and uſeleſs abſtraction from the world appears to be an extreme ſuppoſition of the moraliſt, and to have been rarely indulged; and, indeed, it is difficult to conceive any modification or degree of ſtudy, which may not, directly or indirectly, tend to benefit ſociety. Beſides, it may be reaſonably aſked, whether the evils of this rare and continued abſtraction are not compenſated and outweighed by the advantages of retirement and mental occupation. If abſtinence from guilt is next to the performance of poſitive duties; if employment is a preventive of vices, of which vacancy of mind is the ſource and the ſupport; mental occupation, not otherwiſe exceptionable, is, at leaſt, entitled to the praiſe of negative virtue.

It is thus that the oppoſite effects of intellectual advancement upon different minds place it in a light alternately favourable and diſadvantageous. Superior knowledge, a greater acquaintance with mankind, a deeper inſight into the nature of things, occaſioned, reſpectively, the humility of Socrates, and the pride of Diogenes. To ſhrink with diſguſt from the profane vulgar, to look down with contempt upon the maſs of mankind, from the domes and pinnacles of elevated philoſophy [c], are charges, which have been often brought

[c] Edita doctrina ſapientum templa ſerena,
Deſpicere unde queas alios, &c.
LUCRET.

againſt

againſt intellectual preeminence. Nor can it be denied, that ſuch preeminence may, occaſionally, give riſe to preſumptuous infatuation. But it muſt, at the ſame time, be remembered, that pride is, in general, the quality of ignorant and weak minds; that the great labour, the ſlow progreſs, the ineffectual ſtruggles, and inſuperable impediments, of which the mind muſt be conſcious in the purſuit of knowledge; its inability to account for a variety of facts, to fathom with ſucceſs many intereſting topics; will be, naturally, moſt apparent to him, whoſe ſtudies and obſervations have been deepeſt and wideſt; and that theſe conſtant remembrancers of human imbecillity will prevent or correct, as the increaſe of knowledge tends to promote, the pride of mental ſuperiority.

SUCH appear to be ſome of the leading circumſtances, in which morals are affected by mental improvement; and, from the compariſon, which has been made, it ſhould ſeem, that the benefits derived from this improvement far exceed the evils, which may, occaſionally, be apprehended. Theſe ſpeculative poſitions may be partly confirmed by an appeal to experience; by viewing the effects of this improvement upon morals, as diſplayed in EXAMPLES, taken from the moſt conſpicuous departments of life. A mode of confirmation not to be diſregarded, though it is capable of being improperly purſued; ſince it is obvious, that examples without number might be produced on either ſide.

Of the ancient world, of the times antecedent to the Chriſtian æra, it may, perhaps, be juſtly affirmed, that ſome of the greateſt intellectual prodigies, and an extraordinary portion of human talents, were to be found in the ſchools and retreats of PHILOSOPHY; were to be found amongſt men, whoſe deciſions were regarded as the code of reaſon, and governed, more or leſs, the conduct of their countrymen. And perhaps it may be as juſtly affirmed, with reſpect to the majority of the ancient philoſophers, that their lives were more innocent and exemplary than thoſe of their contemporaries;

raries; a circumſtance which may, in ſome meaſure, be aſcribed to conſtant occupation of mind, and a more diſtant removal from the allurements of ſenſe. Yet, it muſt be confeſſed, whilſt venerable muſt ever be the names of Socrates, of Plato, and of Ariſtotle; whilſt the Academy and the Lycæum muſt be regarded as the ſchools of exalted morality; and whilſt negative praiſe, at leaſt, is due to the rigid and dignified ſeverity of Zeno, the title of philoſopher, in earlier as well as in later times, has been uſurped and abuſed; and virtue turns aſide with a bluſh from the groſſneſs of Cynic brutality, and the ſpecious voluptuouſneſs of the followers of Epicurus.

The ſtupendous taſk of fundamental LEGISLATION, the proſperity of extenſive and unborn communities reſulting from the powers of a ſingle mind, appears to have demanded no common ſhare of individual abilities. And it may, perhaps, be ſaid of the moſt celebrated legiſlators, that their examples have, in general, recommended, what their ſtatutes have ordained. Lycurgus, and Solon, and Numa may be reſpectively ranked among the beſt of their countrymen; and our own wiſe and illuſtrious Alfred is not more to be venerated for his talents, than for his virtues.

An extraordinary ſhare of intellectual powers has belonged to WRITERS; to thoſe men, whoſe individual productions compoſe, in a great meaſure, the permanent and viſible aggregate of human abilities: from whoſe minds, as delineated in their writings, it is fair, in moſt caſes, to conjecture and to appreciate their moral characters. And though, upon this ſubject, mankind will entertain very contrary opinions, yet this, it is preſumed, will be denied by few: that writers, confeſſedly immoral in their works, form but the leſſer part; that the wanton effuſions of ſuch authors as Anacreon, Catullus, or Rocheſter, bear not an equal, and, perhaps, but a ſmall, proportion to the multitude of moral and unexceptionable writings; and, above all, that thoſe works, which are dictated, principally

cipally or partly, by a ſpirit of immorality, fall, in general, within the province of Imagination or Wit, and muſt not, therefore, be ranked under the higheſt ſpecies of Intellectual Excellence.

To complete what remains of this inquiry, it will be ſufficient to take a curſory view of ſome of the moſt diſtinguiſhed STATESMEN and PUBLIC CHARACTERS; for under this head may be claſſed another great portion of human abilities. In traverſing the regions of Grecian antiquity, although the ſtudent is ſurpriſed by the uncommon powers and the abandoned profligacy of Alcibiades, by a few of thoſe anomalies, which ſeem to baffle ſpeculation and to ſet ſyſtem at defiance, yet he ſoon becomes familiar with the illuſtrious union of talents and virtues, in Cimon, in Epaminondas, in Phocion, in Ariſtides [d]. If from hence he carries his eye downward, through the period of Roman greatneſs, examples of this kind ſtill crowd upon his view. He joins in the applauſe, which hiſtory has beſtowed upon Curius, Cincinnatus, Camillus, Fabricius, Marcellus, Paulus, Lælius, the Catos, the Scipios. And whether it be from the influence of an early prejudice, or whether in the Roman annals, diſplays of virtue are really more frequent and more dazzling, characters like the preceding appear to abound in a proportion far beyond that of the Syllas and the Catilines.

BUT the proofs, which are with more difficulty and uncertainty derived from individual characters, may be obtained, with greater eaſe, and ſtronger conviction, by examining Intellectual Excellence, as it enters into the CHARACTER of NATIONS. In this inquiry, the mind is not loſt in the infinity of examples: nations do not, as individuals often do, throw a veil over their real character: nor, like them, are they prone to ſudden and capricious changes. As they are more permanent in their nature, ſo are they fitter ſubjects

[d] The talents of Phocion and of Epaminondas may be inferred from the important offices which they filled. See their Lives by C. Nepos.

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of philoſophical examination: we contemplate them throughout a much longer period, and are thus better able to trace the regular dependence of the effect upon its cauſe, through all the variations which they undergo. What before, therefore, might be thought to illuſtrate, rather than to eſtabliſh our poſitions, will now be made ſubſervient to a more important end; and the analogy which we are endeavouring to maintain, will not only be made clearer by examples, but the argument alſo will derive force from their number.

An opinion has partially obtained (an opinion, engrafted, perhaps, by poetic fiction, and cheriſhed by the fondneſs of wild imagination), that morality is inconſiſtent with a ſtate of refinement, or leſs calculated to flouriſh in poliſhed ſociety, than amidſt rude ſimplicity and ſavage independence: that virtue reſides, not in the regions of boaſted civilization, not in countries enlightened and ſoftened by arts, but amidſt the mountains of Lapland, or the deſerts of Tartary; upon the ſhores of Guinea, or the banks of the Oronoco. But what cool and unprejudiced obſerver can lament, upon the ſcore of morality, the riſe and improvement of arts, the progreſs of ſcience, the diffuſion of letters, the ameliorated adminiſtration of juſtice[f], and the comparative refinement of manners? Surely the enthuſiaſt alone, when bewailing the vices of mankind, can deplore the civilization of Europe, can ſigh for the days of Caſſibelan, or Caractacus, and wiſh to ſee reſtored the ſentiments and manners of the early race of Britons. There is, according to the opinion of a ſagacious Writer[g], a propenſity in human nature to magnify the virtues of paſt times, and to decry thoſe of the preſent generation. Hence nations, in the period of their refinement, have eſteemed themſelves leſs virtuous than their anceſtors; and, as authors have abounded in ſuch periods

[f] One very beneficial effect of this has been the abolition of pecuniary compenſation for crimes. Vide Robertſon's Charles V. vol. ii. book ii. p. 105. 4to. ed.

[g] Hume, part ii. eſſay 2.

only, this opinion has been widely diffuſed among mankind. But the faireſt criterion, by which nations can eſtimate the morals of their foreſathers, is to be found in the character of the uncivilized tribes in their own day. Perfidy was aſcribed by the refined Greeks and Romans to all the barbarous nations, by which they were ſurrounded. In later times (notwithſtanding that ſome exceptions may be admitted to exiſt), amongſt ſavage and uncultivated communities, the groſſeſt immorality has been generally diſcovered. Treachery, cruelty, drunkenneſs [h], laſciviouſneſs, and even an immoderate paſſion for gaming, all, or ſome, at leaſt, of theſe vices, are obſerved to prevail amongſt them. Gaming is a vice to which the ancient Germans were inſatiably addicted [i]; and the ſavage of North America, in the intervals of hunting and war, a ſtranger to the duties of civilized life, unoccupied by intellectual exerciſe, has recourſe to this amuſement, and in the moment of eager and frantic agitation, frequently ſtakes the whole of his poſſeſſions, his clothes, his arms, or his liberty [k]. The indifference of theſe ſavages to their neareſt connections, their inhumanity to their offſpring, and their barbarity to captives taken in battle, are univerſally known. With fatal ingenuity had they anticipated [l] thoſe baneful European liquors, to the ſcarcity of which they may, in ſome meaſure, owe the preſervation of their race. Whilſt in theſe cold and unenviable communities neareſt relations are regarded with apathy, or ſhunned with unnatural horror, even in the pangs of ſickneſs and of death [m].

[h] Vide Dunbar, Eſſay x. p. 349. "Among ſavages, the deſire of ſomething "that is of power to intoxicate, is, in every ſituation, the ſame. Such a ſimi- "larity of taſte, among people in ſuch different ſituations, muſt be aſcribed to the "influence of ſome moral cauſe." Robertſon's America, vol. i. p. 398.

[i] Tacitus de Mor. Germ. ſect. 24.

[k] Hennepin ſays of the Ilinois: "They are great gameſters, as well as all the "other ſavages that I have known in America." Travels, c. 33. See alſo Robertſon's America, vol. i. p. 396—7.

[l] Id. Ibid.

[m] Id. p. 406.

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Many of the nations in the interior of Africa have been found, by a late adventurous Traveller, to diſplay, in their character, a greater number of valuable qualities, more benevolence, more humanity, more integrity, than the inhabitants of Europe had, perhaps, ſurmiſed. But the virtues of theſe Africans are by no means unqualified; and it muſt be remembered that, if virtue, beyond what might have been expected, has been witneſſed in the boſom of Africa, a higher degree of civilization, and a greater acquaintance with the arts have alſo been diſcovered. But it muſt, above all, be conſidered, that the cruelty, rapacity, and perfidy of the Moors are proportionate to their ignorance, and form a ſtriking and an abundant counterpoiſe to the virtues of the Mandingo and the neighbouring nations [n].

The Chineſe, a learned and refined people, are ſtigmatiſed deſervedly for their perfidious cunning. But the people of Whidah, in Africa, are equally addicted to diſhoneſt practices, and even exult in their fraudulent adroitneſs [o]. The native of Malacca is alſo remarkable for his propenſity to theft. The rude hordes of Kalmucks are not, according to travellers, more tenacious of good faith than politer nations [p]; and when, in unciviliſed countries, a ſpirit of diſhoneſty frequently appears, or, in the abſence of temptation, is ſupplied by other vices; when the Braſilian, though honeſt, glories in revenge; when the negro of Sierra Leone [q] lives but for the indulgence of his groſſer appetites; and when ſo great a part of the natives of Otaheite are loſt to all ſenſe of connubial fidelity or parental affection;—it is vain to alledge, that in many rude countries locks and bolts are unknown; that cabins may there be neglected

[n] Vide Parke's Travels into the Interior of Africa.
[o] Kaimes's Sketches, book iii. ſk. ii. p. 165.
[p] Hanway's Travels, part i. c. 16.
[q] Buffon's Nat. Hiſt. vol. i. p. 239.

without danger, and that diſhoneſty is not the vice of the Laplanders, the Oſtiacs, the Chilians, or the Hottentots[r].

The morals of Europe in the dark ages were ſuch as evince how greatly virtue has triumphed in the progreſs of civilization, in the revival of arts, ſciences, and literature. From this period men (ſays Robertſon) "were accuſtomed to exerciſes and occupations, which "tended to ſoften their manners, and give them ſome reliſh for "thoſe gentler virtues which are peculiar to nations, amongſt whom "ſcience hath been cultivated with ſucceſs[s]." If we review the annals of our own country, before the æra of the Reformation, we ſhall find that the number of aſſaſſinations, and the frequent uſe of poiſons, the depredations of lawleſs banditti, the perjury of jurymen, the corruption of magiſtrates, the ſpecious violation of an oath[t], and the profligacy of the moſt ſacred characters, tend ſtrongly to refute that intemperate cenſoriouſneſs, which rails at the degeneracy of modern times. True it is, that the reformation of religion has proved, in a great meaſure, the reformation of morals; but that reformation itſelf was the acknowledged effect of the revival of letters, of the reſuſcitation and advancement of thoſe mental powers, which had for ages been neglected.

In the moſt enlightened nations of Europe, in England, in France, in Italy; (countries, where the efforts of awakened intellect have rivalled or exceeded all its former energies) cauſe, it muſt be confeſſed, has been given for the cenſure of diſſoluteneſs and depravity of manners. Yet, in regions, where intellect is, in a manner, torpid, where arts, ſciences and learning are unknown or deſpiſed, in the Turkiſh dominions, the vices of more poliſhed nations are equalled and ſurpaſſed. Integrity is as often ſacrificed to intereſt;

[r] Kaimes's Sketches, book iii. ſk. ii. p. 132. et ſeq.

[s] View of the State of Europe.

[t] Kaimes's Sketches, ubi ſupra, p. 166, et ſeq. and p. 158. and 161.

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revenge and voluptuouſneſs every where prevail; and the Koran, already licentious, is tortured to vindicate the groſſeſt immorality. Whilſt the neighbouring inhabitants of Perſia, who, by a long ſeries of wars and calamities, have expelled the arts and fallen from civilization, and who, according to their own characteriſtic confeſſion, "have but one eye, whilſt Europeans have two[u]," are notorious for cruelty and for perfidy, and in licentious indulgences are almoſt unequalled.

The preceding examples appear ſufficient to prove, that early and uncivilized communities, where intellect but faintly dawns, are far from being more virtuous than poliſhed nations. That the arts are the offspring of intellect, that wealth is the product of the arts, that luxury is the conſequence of wealth, that temptations to vice and inability to withſtand them may be increaſed by luxury, cannot, indeed, be denied. Yet civilization, with all its diſadvantages, even after it has introduced an exceſs of luxury, is morally preferable (if we may judge from experience) to primitive barbariſm or early improvement. The golden age is the fiction of poets: the Tartars, the Moors, and a multitude of abject and degrading examples actually exiſt. And to reject the moral benefits of civilization and refinement, becauſe theſe may be, in ſome reſpects, the cauſe of immorality, is to ſolicit the return of original darkneſs, and to deprecate the manifold bleſſings of the ſun, becauſe that ſource of light, of life and of plenty, ſometimes kindles the peſtilence, or deſolates a land with dearth.

THUS has the Influence of Intellectual Excellence upon MORALITY been traced in a SPECULATIVE VIEW of its GOOD and ILL EFFECTS; in INDIVIDUAL EXAMPLES; and in the comparative CHARACTER of NATIONS. And, from the preponderancy of arguments which has appeared after a candid examination, Intel-

[u] Hanway's Travels, part ii. c. 51.

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lectual and Moral Excellence may be contemplated in the relation of Cauſe and Effect.—But the Connection, which exiſts between them, is not to be diſcovered ſolely in the Effects of Mental Improvement upon Morals: advancement in Morals regulates, in its turn, the occupations of the Intellect. In proportion to the influence of the only true Ethics, though the ſyſtem ſhrinks not from inveſtigation, and reaſon is unfettered and uncontrolled, reaſon will itſelf become inſenſibly more diffident. It will fear to intrude upon the preſence of the Deity, to violate his ſacred and inacceſſible abodes; and will rather turn to contemplate his lower works, and explore

"His goodneſs beyond thought, and pow'r divine [x]."

The increaſe of that influence will ſuggeſt, at the ſame time, abundant occupation for the moſt comprehenſive and moſt active mind. It will induce the ingenious or the learned to employ their abilities in alleviating the condition of the human race, in obviating its wants, and multiplying its reſources; or it will prompt them to devote their talents to the nobleſt of purpoſes, the general encouragement and promotion of virtue. It will teach them, in their career through life, never to proſtitute their powers in the purſuit of emolument or fame; it will moderate, without proſcribing, the ſallies of wit, and will temper, without weakening, the efforts of genius.

It may now be affirmed, without temerity, that the deference, commanded by talents, is uſually juſt: and that the ardour of intellectual emulation, whether in individuals, in ſocieties or nations, is not only innocent, but, in a high degree, laudable. Falſe would be that prudence, fatal and deteſtable that timid circumſpection, which ſhould ſeek to curb the career of intellect, to ſuppreſs its energies, or check its cultivation. The powers of an exalted underſtanding, the gifts of nature and the acquiſitions of induſtry, have been, it is true, not unfrequently perverted, have been made

[x] Milton.

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ſubſervient to the baſeſt and moſt criminal purpoſes. But, to overbalance theſe evils, the efforts, the purſuits, and the improvement of intellect have baniſhed ferocity and ſoftened human intercourſe; awakened benevolence and inſpired liberality; corrected vice and added luſtre to virtue; amuſed the liſtleſs and occupied the idle; have ſupported the dignity, yet reſtrained the preſumption of our nature; and have cauſed flowers, more fair and more fragrant than any which decorate the haunts of licentiouſneſs, to ſpring up and bloom beſide the paths of morality. Nor ſhould it be forgotten by thoſe, who would degrade Intellectual Excellence, that, like the "quality of mercy,"

"It is an attribute to God himſelf."

EDWARD MILES RUDD, A. B.
ORIEL COLL.

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